

Humboldt
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Iowa Great Places

The Humboldt-Dakota City area put its best foot forward in a meeting with two representatives from the 12 member Iowa Great Places Board on Friday.

Terri Lynch of Marian and Gil Spence of Dubuque met with the Humboldt-Dakota City Great Places Committee members at the Oxbow Building on Highway 3 west of Humboldt for about one and one-half hours.

Royce Humphreys served as Master of Ceremonies and talked about an "intense community spirit," shown in the Humboldt-Dakota City area.

A professionally done video completed by Video

Concepts was shown entitled, "The Des Moines River Valley, Where Life Flows Together."

Humphreys then outlined how a project to improve the west fork of the Des Moines River has grown to include a multitude of positive impact projects, including rehabilitating the gates and adding a gate to the dam, dredging the river, trail and park development, watershed conservation (for more than 700,000 acres that drain into the river) and Riverfest and other countywide events.

"The problem is sedimentation in the river. The initial goal was to re-establish and expand the river use," Humphreys said.

A feasibility study has been completed and a watershed sur-

vey is underway.

Estimated cost to remove the sediment from the river is \$900,000.

"It makes sense to work on keeping the sediment from entering upstream," Humphreys said.

By making larger gates on the dam at Humboldt, the river should be able to better clean itself out.

Estimated cost to repair the existing gate, which was installed in 1905, is \$225,000, and to add a second gate is estimated at \$426,500.

Tying the trail system into the Three Rivers Trail and con

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necting to surrounding county trail systems is estimated at \$4 million.

The plan also includes hiring a watershed coordinator to work with landowners on conservation projects along the river.

Resident Scott Curran talked to the Great Places representatives about why he and his family moved back to Humboldt after living in Des Moines. He said the three main reasons were the sense of community, the opportunity for involvement and the outstanding community pride.

Committee member Dr. Joyce Judas said it has been quite an accomplishment to get the project to this point through a grass roots effort

Lynch said it was obvious the committee had put their "heart and soul into this."

"We're humbled by enthusiasm we've seen in communities," Lynch said.

Just three out of more than 70 applicants will be chosen for the Iowa Great Places program, which will provide guidance to the chosen communities. Friday's presentation was videotaped and will be shown to the other Great Places members.

Lynch said the committee will deliberate on Oct. 3 to make a decision on which three pilot projects to choose. A formal announcement will be made on Oct. 11 at a conference in Iowa City.